



America **FORWARD**

March 17, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell,

Thank you for your leadership as our nation faces unprecedented economic challenges. We are convinced that as the current crisis deepens—intensifying needs in the nation's most economically vulnerable communities and forcing greater and greater numbers of Americans out of their jobs and homes—it is absolutely crucial that the nation invest in service, social innovation, and the non-profit sector. We strongly support the Serve America Act (S. 277) for precisely this reason.

The Serve America Act, introduced by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), features a number of proposals for using service and social innovation to address pressing challenges in areas such as education, public health, poverty, and energy efficiency. It also provides much-needed support for the non-profit sector at a time when the demand for the vital services it provides is rising sharply, even as shrinking revenues decrease capacity and threaten debilitating job losses.

The Act will strengthen the non-profit sector, empowering it to respond to rising needs in communities across the nation. The Serve America Act will:

- Create four targeted **problem-solving corps** that will deploy Americans of all ages to increase access to job training and placement resources, help raise high school graduation and college-going rates, enhance energy efficiency and improve natural resources, and improve access to health care;
- Establish **Community Solutions Funds** to invest in and scale the proven, innovative solutions that are having an impact in communities across our nation. The Fund will promote greater innovation in the social sector and evaluate performance based on results;
- Found **Youth Engagement Zones** to involve in-school and out-of-school youth in high-quality service learning projects and recognize **"Campuses of Service,"** institutions of higher learning that engage students in service activities, integrate service and learning, and promote service careers;
- Draw upon the unique insights and leadership skills of individuals who have completed military and civilian service through **Innovation Fellowships**. These fellowships will enable such individuals to establish non-profit organizations that respond to local and national needs. The Act will also call upon Baby Boomers to use their talents to address national challenges through **Encore Fellowships**;
- Honor the long-standing tradition of community volunteering by creating a **Volunteer Generation Fund** to increase the number of Americans who are able to work with community and faith-based organizations to meet growing needs; and
- Mobilize skilled Americans to serve in developing countries around the world to tackle urgent problems, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria through **Volunteers for Prosperity**.

Notably, the Act also emphasizes the importance of results, accountability and transparency, creates indicators of civic health, and requires that federal investments be matched with significant contributions from private, philanthropic, state, and local sources. In these ways, the Serve America Act ensures that the non-profit sector's response will be both effective and cost-efficient. Moreover, the Act promotes collaboration between the non-profit sector, local government actors, and the State Commissions, which have provided leadership with respect to service since their creation, thereby guaranteeing that programs are tailored to meet state and local needs.

Most importantly the Act will, as President Obama noted in his address before Congress, "encourage a renewed spirit of national service for this and future generations." It will provide Americans of all ages and backgrounds—who are more eager than ever to help shape this nation's future—with opportunities to confront the challenges facing our country.

Thank you for your public service and your leadership in this time of crisis. We hope that you will enable greater numbers of Americans to serve with you to collectively strengthen our nation by supporting and fully funding the Serve America Act.

Sincerely,

signed organizations listed below

cc:

Senator Thad Cochran
Senator Daniel Inouye
Senator Edward Kennedy
Senator Michael Enzi
Senator Orrin Hatch
Senator Tom Harkin
Senator Arlen Specter

- | | |
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| 1. 1Sky | 27. AmeriCorps Alums |
| 2. 40Plus of Greater Washington | 28. AmeriCorps, Monterey County United for Literacy |
| 3. AARP | 29. Amherst Youth Foundation |
| 4. AAUW Birmingham Branch Foundation, Inc. | 30. AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation |
| 5. Accounting Aid Society | 31. Arts Council of Greater Lansing Inc |
| 6. Action Without Borders / Idealist.org | 32. Association for Utah Community Health |
| 7. ACTION-Housing, Inc. | 33. Association of Art Museum Directors |
| 8. Admission Possible | 34. Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies |
| 9. After School All Stars | 35. Association of Performing Arts Presenters |
| 10. Afterschool Alliance | 36. Association of University Centers on Disabilities |
| 11. AIDS Community Services of WNY | 37. Atlas Service Corps, Inc. |
| 12. Alianze Latina | 38. AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps |
| 13. Alliance for Children and Families | 39. AYMM - A Young Mothers Ministry |
| 14. Alliance for Community Trees | 40. B Lab |
| 15. America Forward | 41. Batavia Youth Bureau |
| 16. America's All Stars | 42. Be the Change, Inc. |
| 17. America's Promise Alliance | 43. BELL |
| 18. America's Service Commissions | 44. Belle Isle Botanical Society |
| 19. American Academy of Pediatrics | 45. Best Friends Foundation |
| 20. American Association of Museums | 46. Big Brothers Big Sisters |
| 21. American Humanics | 47. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands, NE |
| 22. American Jewish Committee | 48. Black Churches and Black Colleges/Universities Network |
| 23. American Recreation Coalition | 49. Boys & Girls Club of Huntington |
| 24. American Red Cross | |
| 25. Americans for a National Service Act | |
| 26. Americans for the Arts | |

50. Boys & Girls Club of Manchester, NH
51. Boys & Girls Club of South Logan County
52. Boys & Girls Club of Stamford, CT
53. Boys & Girls Club of the Monroe Area
54. Boys & Girls Clubs of America
55. Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland
56. Boys & Girls Club of Dundee Township
57. Boys & Girls Clubs of Fresno County, CA
58. Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Salt Lake, UT
59. Boys & Girls Club of Indian River County
Florida
60. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mitchell County, GA
61. Boys & Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley
62. Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula
63. Boys & Girls Clubs of Tustin
64. Boys and Girls Club of Carbon County
65. Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County
Florida
66. Bridging Communities, Inc.
67. Break Away
68. Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens
Society
69. Buffalo Museum of Science
70. BUILD
71. Building Bridges Coalition (A Project of the
Brookings Institute)
72. Building Tomorrow, Inc.
73. California AmeriCorps Alliance
74. California Conservation Corps
75. CalSERVES-NCOE
76. CampFire USA
77. Campus Compact
78. Canisius College Women's Business Center
79. Canyon Country Youth Corps, UT
80. Carpenters Union Local 72
81. CASA Mississippi
82. Cascade Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.
83. Catholic Big Brothers Big Sisters
84. Catholic Charities Service Corps
85. Catholic Charities USA
86. Catholic Network of Volunteer Service
87. Catholic Youth Organization
88. Cazenovia Resource Center and Library
89. Center for Community Change
90. Center for Community Involvement, Miami
Dade College, FL
91. Center for Strategic Philanthropy and Civil
Society
92. Cesar E. Chavez Foundation
93. Charleston WV Police's Neighborhood
Assistance Officers/Volunteers in Police
Services
94. Charleston WV Police's Citizen Police Academy
Alumni Association
95. Chicago Area Project
96. Child Abuse Council of Muskegon County, MI
97. Children for Children
98. CHOICES Education Group
99. CIRCLE
100. Citizen Schools
101. City of Charleston, WV Police Department
102. City Year
103. City Year Chicago
104. Civic Enterprises
105. Civic Ventures
106. Civicorps Schools
107. CLEARCorps USA
108. Cliff Hagan Boys and Girls club in
Owensboro, Kentucky
109. Coconino Rural Environment Corps, AZ
110. College of Southern Idaho Office on Aging
111. College Summit
112. Colorado Range Rider Youth Corps
113. Colorado Youth Corps Association
114. Columbus Housing Partnership
115. Common Cause
116. COMMON GROUND Consulting LLC™
117. Commongood Careers
118. Communities In Schools
119. Communities In Schools of KCK/Wyandotte
County
120. Community Action Partnership
121. Community Living Network, Inc.
122. Community Residence Corp.
123. Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc.
124. Computers for Youth
125. Connecticut Commission on Community Service
126. Conservation Corps North Bay
127. Covenant Faith Outreach Ministries & CCD
128. Cradle Beach Camp
129. CrossCultural Solutions
130. Dance/USA
131. DC Central Kitchen
132. Democrats Work
133. Detroit Science Center
134. DIAL/SELF Teen Services
135. Donors Forum (Chicago, Illinois)
136. Earth Force
137. Earth Spirit Educational Services
138. Eastern Iowa Conservation Alliance
139. Eastern Nebraska/Western Iowa Medical
Reserve Corps
140. EducationWorks
141. Elev8 New Mexico
142. Enterprise Charter School
143. Equal Justice Works
144. Erie Country Soil and Water
145. Erie Regional Housing Development Corp
146. Every Person Influences Children Center
147. Experience Corps
148. Experiential Learning, Davenport University
149. Families Of Murdered Children Support Group,
Flint, MI
150. Fertile Earth Foundation

151. First Focus
152. Fitness Forward
153. Food Bank of Western NY
154. Friends of the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team, Inc., WV
155. Friends of VISTA
156. Generation Engage
157. Generations Incorporated
158. Generations United
159. Genesee County Youth Bureau
160. Genesys Works
161. Georgia Center for Nonprofits
162. Global Citizen Year
163. Good Shepherd Services
164. Green for All
165. GreenLight Fund
166. Groundwork, Inc.
167. Habitat for Humanity International
168. Habitat for Humanity of Iowa
169. Habitat for Humanity Sonoma County
170. Habitat for Humanity- Kansas City, Inc.
171. Hampton Community Coalition, Hampton, NH
172. HandsOn Battle Creek
173. HandsOn Hartford
174. HandsOn New Orleans
175. HandsOn Twin Cities
176. Higher Achievement
177. Holistic Development Community Center
178. Homeless Alliance of Western NY
179. Hope CommUnity Center/Office for Farmworker Ministry, Apopka, FL
180. Hope refugees
181. HOPE Worldwide
182. Horizons for Homeless Children
183. I Have a Dream Foundation
184. IFF
185. iMentor
186. Independent Sector
187. Indiana Campus Compact
188. Innovations in Civic Participation
189. International Institute of Buffalo
190. International Justice Mission, William and Mary Campus Chapter
191. Iowa Campus Compact
192. Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service
193. Isabella County Commission on Aging
194. Jackets for Jobs, Inc.
195. Japanese American Citizens League
196. Jewish Coalition for Service
197. Juma Ventures
198. Jumpstart
199. Junior Achievement
200. Junior Achievement of Central Michigan, Inc.
201. Junior Achievement of Michiana
202. Junior Achievement of Northeast Michigan
203. Junior Achievement of Southwest Michigan
204. Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes, Inc.
205. KaBOOM!
206. Kalamazoo Communities In Schools
207. Keep America Beautiful, Inc
208. Kiwanis Books for Kids
209. KickStart
210. Kids Against Hunger Coalition of Michigan
211. KIDS Consortium, Auburn, Maine
212. Kids County in Alachua County, Inc
213. King Center Charter School
214. King Urban Life Center
215. KIPP Schools
216. Kupu (Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps)
217. L'Anse Creuse High School
218. Larimer County Youth Conservation Corps
219. Latin Americans United for Progress
220. LeaderSpark
221. League of American Orchestras
222. Lenawee United Way
223. Leukemia and Lymphoma Center
224. Lewis-Clark Service Corps
225. Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation
226. Lions Club International
227. Local Conservation Corps, Fresno County EOC
228. Local Initiatives Support Corporation
229. Lothlorien Therapeutic Riding Center
230. Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations
231. Louisiana Delta Service Corps
232. Louisiana Serve Commission
233. Lutheran Social Services of Southern California
234. Management Leadership for Tomorrow
235. Marin Community Foundation, Marin County, CA
236. Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations
237. Maryland Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism
238. Massachusetts Campus Compact
239. Massachusetts Service Alliance
240. MATCH Schools
241. MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership
242. Michigan Audubon
243. Michigan Campus Compact
244. Michigan County Social Services Association
245. Michigan Nonprofit Association
246. Michigan's Children
247. Mid Michigan Big Brothers Big Sisters
248. Mile High Youth Corps
249. Minnesota Campus Compact
250. Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service
251. Mobilize.org
252. Montana Campus Compact
253. Montana Conservation Corps
254. Montmorency County Commission on Aging!
255. Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit

256. Mothers In Crisis
257. Music National Service Initiative
258. MY TURN, Inc.
259. myGoodDeed.org
260. myImpact.org
261. Nancy C. and Dale Dougherty Foundation
262. National Academy on an Aging Society
263. National Alliance of Faith and Justice
264. National Association of Community Health Centers
265. National Black Child Development Institute
266. National Center for Learning and Citizenship
267. National Conference on Citizenship
268. National Council of Nonprofits
269. National Council on Aging
270. National Middle School Association
271. National Neighborhood Day
272. National Peace Corps Association
273. National Senior Corps Association
274. National Service-Learning Partnership
275. National Student Partnerships
276. National Youth Leadership Council
277. NeighborWorks Lincoln, NE
278. Network for Good
279. Nevada Conservation Corps
280. New Beginnings, NH
281. New Creations Community Outreach
282. New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
283. New Leaders for New Schools
284. New Look Foundation
285. New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism
286. New Profit, Inc.
287. New Sector Alliance
288. New York City Coalition Against Hunger
289. New York State Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service
290. NewSchools Venture Fund
291. NFF Capital Partners
292. NFTE (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship)
293. NOLA YURP Initiative
294. Nonprofit Finance Fund
295. North Carolina Center for Nonprofits
296. NorthSky Nonprofit Network
297. NorthWest Initiative, Lansing, MI
298. Northwestern College
299. Notre Dame Mission Volunteers, Apopka Florida
300. Notre Dame Mission Volunteers/Americorps, Hartford, CT
301. OAI, inc.
302. OCA - Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans
303. Ohio Community Service Council
304. Oklahoma Community Service Commission
305. Open Door Rescue Mission of Detroit Michigan
306. OPERA America
307. Opportunity Knocks
308. Ordinary People International
309. Oregon Volunteers!
310. Orrville Area Boys and Girls Club, OH
311. Oswego City-County Youth Beaurea/ Oswego AmeriCorps
312. Outreach Services International
313. Outward Bound Atlanta
314. Outward Bound USA
315. Overtown Youth Center, Inc., Miami, FL
316. PARC Environmental
317. Parents Alliance
318. Partners in Routt County
319. Peace Games
320. Peace Jam
321. Pegasus Foundation
322. Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations
323. Performing Arts Alliance
324. Pewabic Pottery
325. Points of Light Institute
326. Pride Center of Western NY
327. Project APPLE/REACH, Bellflower Unified School District
328. Project HEALTH
329. Project Tomorrow
330. Public Allies
331. Rare
332. Recycled Treasures
333. Region VII Aging Services, WV
334. Ride Connection
335. Roca
336. Rockland County AmeriCorps
337. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
338. Root Cause/Public Innovators
339. Rubicon Programs Inc.
340. Rural Appalachian Improvement League, Inc., WV
341. RYASAP Catalyst for Community Change
342. Salud Family Health Centers, CO
343. Sea Mar Community Health Center, Seattle, WA
344. SeaChange Capital Partners
345. Self-Advocacy Association of NY
346. Serve Idaho, Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism
347. Serve Wisconsin
348. ServeMinnesota
349. ServeNext
350. ServeWyoming
351. Service For Peace
352. Service-Learning United
353. ServiceNation
354. Share Our Strength
355. Smiles Change Lives
356. Social Enterprise Alliance
357. Social Enterprise Associates

358. Soliya
359. South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations
360. South Carolina Commission on National and Community Service
361. Southeast Alaska Guidance Association
362. Southern Association of RSVP Directors
363. Southwest Conservation Corps
364. Special Olympics
365. Sports4Kids
366. Springfield Boys & Girls Club, MA
367. Springfield College
368. Streetwise Partners, Inc.
369. Student Conservation Association
370. Student Volunteer Foundation
371. Students Helping Achieve Philanthropic Excellence
372. Summer Search
373. Survivor Corps
374. The Engineering Society of Detroit
375. The Susquehanna Group
376. Teach For America
377. Teach For America - New Mexico
378. Tennessee Campus Compact
379. Texas Campus Compact
380. The Academy for Career Development
381. The Broad Foundation
382. The Case Foundation
383. The Center for Leadership & Service at Florida International University in Miami, FL
384. The Children's Trust
385. The Corps Network
386. The DREAM Program, Inc.
387. The Exchange Club Family Center
388. The Hope Community Center, Apopka, FL
389. The LEAGUE
390. The Mind Trust
391. The Mission Continues
392. Theatre Communications Group
393. Tower Family Fund, Inc.
394. Townspeople
395. Tri-Counties Regional Center
396. Tulane University
397. TurnAround
398. U.S. Public Service Academy
399. UJA-Federation of New York
400. United Jewish Communities
401. United Negro College Fund
402. United Way Association of South Carolina
403. United Way for Southeast Michigan
404. United Way for Southeastern Michigan
405. United Way of America
406. United Way of Northwest Michigan
407. United Way of Saginaw County
408. United Way of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Volunteer Center
409. Up2Us
410. Urban Fitness Klub
411. Utah Conservation Corps
412. Valley Community Associations
413. Vermont Community Stewardship Program
414. Veterans Innovation Center
415. Voices for National Service
416. Volunteer Ascension
417. Volunteer Center For Anne Arundel County
418. Volunteer Center of Dickinson and Iron Counties, MI
419. Volunteer Center of Greater Kalamazoo
420. Volunteer Center of Otsego County
421. Volunteer Centers of Michigan
422. Volunteer Florida
423. Volunteer Iowa
424. Volunteer NC, Inc.
425. Volunteer Partners, Nebraska
426. VolunteerMatch
427. Volunteers of America
428. Volunteers of America MI
429. Western Hardrock Watershed Team, CO
430. Western New York AmeriCorps
431. Western NY AmeriCorps
432. Western NY Law Center
433. Westminster Community Charter School
434. Wrap4ASmile Foundation, Inc
435. Year Up
436. YMCA of the USA
437. Youth Conservation Corps
438. Youth Service America
439. Youth Villages
440. Youth Volunteer Corps of America
441. YouthBuild USA